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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Twenty-fifth session of the Commission/ sixteenth meeting of the Conference of Ministers

Tripoli, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
15 - 19 May 1990

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE DRAFT MEDIUM-TERM PLAN, 1992-1997

90-508

INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 671(XXIV) of 7 April 1989 (see annex I to the present report), the Conference of Ministers responsible for economic development and planning, the Commission, inter alia, decided to establish an open-ended Ad hoc committee and empowered it to examine the draft Medium-term Plan for the period 1992-1997 to be submitted by the Executive Secretary and make appropriate recommendations to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on behalf of the Commission.

2. The Ad hoc Committee carried out its work at a meeting held at the Commission's headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from to 13 October 1989. The meeting was originally scheduled to take place from to 11 October 1989. However since Wednesday, 11 October 1989 was declared a public holiday, the Committee decided not to meet on that day and completed its work on Friday, 13 October 1989.

A. Attendance and organization of work

3. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following States members of the Commission: Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, the Congo, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Lesotho, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, the Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, the Sudan, Togo, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Zaire.

4. The following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies were represented: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), International Labour Organisation (ILO), Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

5. Observers were also present from the following intergovernmental organizations: African Regional Centre for Solar Energy (ARCSE), African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP), Regional Centre for Services in Surveying, Mapping and Remote Sensing (RCSSMRS), Pan-African News Agency (PANA), and International Air Transport Association (IATA).

6. The Committee decided to retain the current bureau of the Commission as its own bureau as follows: Chairman - Ethiopia, First Vice-Chairman - the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, and Second Vice-Chairman - the Congo. Since Benin,

the current Rapporteur of the Commission was not represented at the meeting, the Committee unanimously elected Malawi as Rapporteur.

B. Agenda

7. On 3 October 1989, the Committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Election of officers
3. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
4. Consideration of the Draft Medium-term Plan 1992-1997
   (a) Overall orientation and objectives of the programme and the subprogramme narratives
   (b) Subprogramme structure and the number of subprogrammes
   (c) Designation of priorities among subprogrammes
5. Adoption of the report and closure of the meeting

C. Account of proceedings

Opening of the meeting (agenda item 1)

8. The meeting was opened with an address by the Executive Secretary of the Commission in which he recalled the mandate of the Committee as laid down in Commission resolution 671(XXIV). He underlined the importance of the Medium-term Plan as the main policy directive of the United Nations, the ECA component of which constituted the framework within which the Commission would address the socio-economic and technological development problems likely to confront member States during the period of the Plan. In that regard the Plan must reflect, to the fullest extent possible, the needs and aspirations of member States. That, he said, made the role of the Committee particularly important.

9. The Executive Secretary outlined the salient points of the proposed new structure of the Plan and dwelt in particular on the proposed subprogramme structure of the programme. Regional Co-operation for Development in Africa. He had no doubt that the Committee would give the proposed structure the attention it deserved, bearing in mind that the overall objective was for a simpler, more transparent and more compact Plan which involved a better focused, clearer and more consolidated subprogramme structure.

10. He dwelt at length on the issues derived from recent mandates that the proposed programme addressed. The Committee he said was expected to examine closely the objectives, the problems addressed and the strategies to be followed overall and in each subprogramme area with a view to ensuring that the programme reflected fully the priorities of member States.

11. With regard to the question of priority designation among subprogrammes, the Executive Secretary drew the attention of the Committee to the broad areas which were indicated in the Plan document to guide the Committee in designating priorities. He however, emphasized that the decision on priorities was a prerogative that belonged to the Committee only.

Overall orientation and objectives of the programme and subprogramme narratives (Agenda item 4 (b))

12. The representative of the secretariat presented document E/ECA/CM.11/HOC.MTP/ which contained the draft Medium-term Plan, 1992-1997. In doing so he outlined in detail the basis and substance of the general thrust of the plan both at the programme and subprogramme levels. He also required the Committee that its basic task under this agenda item was critically to review the overall orientation, objectives, problems addressed and strategies proposed in the light of what they perceived as member States' priorities, and to make appropriate recommendations with a view to improving the plan.

Part I. Overall orientation and objectives of the programme

13. Several representatives stated that the part on overall orientation and objectives of the programme was properly formulated and that the philosophy and orientation of the programme outlined therein reflected

accurately and fully the aspirations and concerns of the African governments as expressed in such policy documents as the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos as well as those cited in document E/ECA/AU HOC. MTP/1 in paragraph 12. One representative underscored the importance of collective self-reliance and drew the attention of the Committee to paragraph 21 of CIPPSR concerning the Declaration on the Economic Situation in Africa where the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity recognized that the collective efforts of the member states was an important weapon for tackling the prevailing economic crisis and the imperative for the international community to support those efforts. He noted that while there were certain constraints and the sectoral areas of concern there was a need to examine how these concerns would be operationalized.

14. Another representative pointed out, also as was made in paragraph 12 document E/ECA/AU HOC.MTP/1, reference was made to the Khartoum Declaration and emphasis had been placed on the plan on the social dimension of development particularly with respect to the vulnerable groups, the draft plan had not specifically treated the issue of refugees. He stated that the problem of refugees and displaced persons should feature prominently in the next medium-term plan. He further noted that in paragraph 33, document E/ECA/AU HOC.MTP/1 in which the specialized agencies and other units of the United Nations system with which ECA had joint programming and formal working arrangements are referred to, no mention is made of UNHCR and urged ECA to forge such arrangements with that organization on account of the critical importance of the issue of refugees in Africa.

15. Referring to paragraph 15, document E/ECA/AU HOC.MTP/1 where reference is made to the need for the international community to respect its part of the compact entered into in UN-PAAERD in order to enable the full implementation of the present programme, one representative recounted Africa's experiences with the international community and wondered, in the light of the mid-term review of UN-PAAERD as to what measures were being considered to change the attitude of that community as Africa undoubtedly records its continued existence.

16. One representative pointed out the need to put greater emphasis on macro-economic research and analysis, particularly in the light of the major policy issues that were envisaged to face Africa in the 90s.

17. One representative regretted the economic resource considerations in the draft plan which they felt precluded the required stock-taking and

assessment of the capacity of the secretariat and that of the member States to implement the various subprogrammes during the medium-term assessment which would cover not only the personnel and other resource requirements, as well as the modalities of funding would be essential for drawing conclusions on plan implementation. Information on the plan's financing was also essential for the establishment of priorities. As it was, the plan was only a broad policy framework without immediate financial implications.

18. In reacting to these observations, the representative of the secretariat explained that the plan was, as it were, a declaration of intent. As such it was not costed. In its preparation, however, a lot of thought was given to the resources expected to be available to the United Nations during the plan period. Hence, there was a close relationship between the plan and the biennial programme budgets through which the proposed plan would be implemented. The whole work was fully costed activity by activity in terms of post and other objects of expenditure. Several representatives had expressed uncertainty as to whether the deliberations of the ad hoc group would have any impact on the final form and structure of the medium-term plan since these appeared to have already been negotiated at the central level. In that regard, the representative of the secretariat pointed out that the formulation of the Medium-Term Plan was a [illegible] exercise. The views expressed by the Committee on the form and structure of the overall Plan would certainly be brought to the attention of the central reviewing bodies. The views and recommendations of the Committee in respect of the ECE component of the Plan would, in particular, not only be used to redraft the present plan but they would also be transmitted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations together with the redrafted version of the plan.

19. The Committee considered part I of document E/ECE/AD.DOC.MTP/3 subject to the discussion on it.

Part II. Subprogramme narratives

20. The Committee decided to consider the narratives subprogramme by subprogramme and, in some cases, as indicated below, in clusters of subprogrammes. A general comment which pertained to all the narratives was that the language used to describe the capabilities and efforts of member States should be more realistic; it was felt that the text recast to reflect the actual realities.

Sub-programme 1. Executive direction and management

21. Several representatives felt that the objectives of this sub-programme were very broad and vague and therefore worried how its implementation could be concretely evaluated. Others observed that the provision of intellectual leadership was an acceptable objective and stated that a distinction needed to be drawn between the role of the ECA secretariat and those of member States. The operational content of those objectives also needed to be clearly and coherently spelled out.

22. One representative wondered how the secretariat intended to cope with the problems addressed in an effective manner in the light of the observations in paragraph 89 document E/ECA/AD.ECC.MTP/2 that the crucial support services areas such as executive direction and management, would be expanded and made more effective.

23. Another representative stressed the need for the Commission to enlarge substantially its research capabilities in order for it to be better able to address the socio-economic problems of the region. He hoped that the revised ECA might well work out the other regional commissions in this area.

24. Several participants spoke on paragraph 89 document E/ECA/AD.ECC.MTP/2 which concerns the strategy for the period 1982-1987. One representative pointed out that item (c) should be made more explicit to show how the secretariat itself would participate in the United Nations system global decision-making processes. A number of representatives stressed the importance of items (f) and (g). There had to be harmonization in all the activities of the United Nations system agencies and organizations and all others operating in Africa. The relationship between ECA and OAU needed also to be re-examined and strengthened. One representative indicated that item (i) was not internal direction of the institution and specific ideas needed to be articulated for the reviewing and evaluating of its management and operations. Item (o) of the paragraph on the provision of public information was singled out as a vital component of the strategy. It was felt that member States could only request ECA services if they were fully informed of ECA's activities and capabilities. Information also helped in clarifying issues both at the technical and political levels.

25. One representative pointed out that the elements of the strategy only dealt with contacts, consultation and mobilization of resources with

little attention given to internal direction and management particularly within the framework of the major reforms taking place in the framework of the recommendations of the Group of High Level Experts to review the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations. Aspects of the reform exercise should be clearly spelled out in the strategy of the subprogramme. He emphasized that General Assembly resolution 41/213 on the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations should be cited as a legislative authority in this subprogramme.

26. One representative proposed that the various sub-items in paragraph 40 document E/ECA/AD HOC./TP/7 could be usefully grouped under three headings, namely (a) Public relations and awareness; (b) Resource mobilization and utilization, and (c) Research and advisory services. However, after further discussion, the Committee decided that the proposed groups would not cover all the elements of the strategy and therefore, decided to retain the elements as proposed by the secretariat.

27. The Deputy Executive Secretary assured the representatives that their comments and observations were well noted. He explained that the subprogramme was the responsibility of the Office of the Executive Secretary which included the Executive Secretary himself, the Deputy Executive Secretary the office of the Secretary to the Commission and the Information service Unit. Some of the concerns expressed by representatives with respect in particular to research and training, were treated under other subprogrammes.

28. The Committee endorsed this subprogramme subject to the observations made.

Subprogramme 2: Agricultural development policy planning and programming

Subprogramme 3: Development of sustainable agricultural production systems

Subprogramme 4: Development of agricultural institutions and infrastructures

Subprogramme 5: Rural structural transformation and development

Subprogramme 6: Water and living marine resources

29. The Committee decided to review these five subprogrammes together since they all related to the field of food and agriculture.

30. A representative of the secretariat explained that these subprogrammes were being proposed because of the importance of food and agriculture in Africa's economic recovery and transformation and the priority that member States accorded to food and agriculture. The proposed subprogramme structure would facilitate consultations and the harmonization of activities especially with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and would also allow for a more focussed approach to the issues of food and agriculture.

31. Many representatives found the proposed structure ideal. Some participants, however, indicated that the rationale behind the subprogramme structure should be properly spelled out in the plan document.

32. One representative referred to paragraph 42 document E/ECA/AD HOC.MTP/3 and suggested that there were more policy frameworks other than AAF-SAP, within which governments had to continue to implement macro-economic policy measures. Those policy frameworks should also be mentioned.

33. Several representatives underscored the importance of food storage and food security as well as early warning systems as problems that should be addressed. The problems of drought and in that regard, the need to put more emphasis on irrigation were also highlighted. So was the need to strike a balance between the production of export and food crops.

34. Some delegates drew the attention of the Committee to the problem of locusts and urged that that problem should also be fully addressed.

35. One representative suggested that the first sentence of paragraph 42 document E/ECA/AD HOC.MTP/3 should be reviewed to reflect the facts. He explained that the collapse of African agriculture could not be attributed to African countries. The fact is that African agriculture was adversely affected by exogenous factors such as natural calamities and a hostile external environment over which African countries had no control. He further said that such assertions as those in paragraph 52 in the above document, E/ECA/AD HOC.MTP/3 needed also to be toned down as member States were not incapable of applying appropriate policies.

36. Commenting on the strategies proposed, a representative stated that the secretariat should be more practical and operational and should not concentrate overly on studies. Paragraph 69 of the document, therefore, should be revised accordingly.

37. Some representatives observed that not much attention was given to co-operation and global co-ordination. A question was raised as to whether there was co-ordination between ECA and the International Livestock Centre for Africa (ILCA).

38. The representative of the secretariat thanked the representatives for their comments and pointed out that the issues of food storage and security were included under subprogramme 2 and an Early Warning System had been set up with FAO. He explained that the concern with co-ordination was indeed the justification for the ECA/FAO Joint Agriculture Division. He stated that the problem of paragraph 52 the document E/ECA/AD HOC.MTP/5 was essentially a translation one as the words "incapacity" and "inability" did not mean the same thing. However the text would be reviewed. He finally assured the participants that all their comments and observations would be taken into account in revising the document.

39. The Committee decided to endorse these subprogrammes subject to its own observations on them.

Subprogramme 7. Socio-economic analysis, Planning and projections

Subprogramme 8. Least developed, landlocked and island African countries

40. The Committee considered these subprogrammes together.

41. Representatives pointed out that the objectives of subprogrammes 7 and 8 were not very clear. In subprogramme 8 there was need to refer to the forthcoming United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries scheduled to take place in 1990 and the follow-up requirements of that Conference.

42. Some participants also suggested that the problems addressed in paragraph 82 of the document should be reviewed with a view to making them more specific. The language of the last sentence of the paragraph concerning the capacity of member States to develop and use the required techniques was in particular inappropriate.

43. One representative referred to paragraph 89 of the document and pointed out that semi-landlocked countries also had the same problems as

those enumerated for the least developed, landlocked and island African countries. Accordingly, attention should also be given to that group of countries.

84. Another representative pointed out that the problem of the external environment had not received adequate attention and the objective should accordingly be geared to sensitizing that environment.

85. With regard to the proposed strategies of the subprogrammes, one representative stated that training should not be considered as the only major means of resolving the problems which the subprogrammes addressed.

86. A representative of the secretariat explained that training would not be the only focus. He responded to the other questions raised and assured the representatives that the secretariat would take note of all the other concerns expressed by member states in revising the draft plan.

87. The Committee endorsed the subprogrammes subject to the observations made.

Subprogramme 5. Economic co-operation and integration in Africa

88. Addressing the objectives of the subprogramme, several representatives explained that as the machinery for regional economic co-operation and integration already existed, paragraph 93 of the document should be revised to put emphasis on the strengthening of that machinery and not on the establishment of new ones. Other representatives stated that the objectives should also reflect the need to take stock of integration efforts achieved thus far (including such organs as clearing houses etc.) with a view to accelerating African economic integration. That was an imperative otherwise the African economies would be continually marginalized.

89. Several representatives disagreed with the analysis in paragraph 96 of the document namely, that the main difficulty facing African economic integration was the lack of political will on the part of member States. The substantial progress already made in the field of economic co-operation and integration was a clear demonstration that there was political will. It was stated that the difficulties of subregional economic integration could be attributed to other factors such as the youthfulness and weak structure of African economies.

50. One representative stated that while credit should be given for achievements thus far attained, member States should be ready to criticize themselves. He explained that his own country would not wish to be criticized for lacking the political will to share but only have some genuine obstacles.

51. Another representative stated that the strategy should be re-examined particularly with regard to the integration of markets as against the integration of production.

52. Some representatives urged the secretariat to work closely with OAU in this area. It should, in particular, involve OAU with its technical machinery in those sectors so that the process of economic integration could be greatly improved.

53. Responding to the observations and proposals of the representatives, a representative of the secretariat expressed each of the issues raised and assured the participants that the secretariat had taken due note of their observations and that the draft plan would be revised accordingly.

54. The Committee then considered subprogrammes and took the views expressed.

Subprogramme 10: Human resources planning, development and utilization

Subprogramme 11: Social development in Africa

Subprogramme 22: Public administration and fiscal affairs in Africa

55. During the review of these subprogrammes which were considered together, one representative observed that the objective stated in paragraph 10.2 (a) of the draft plan document, should be revised to read "to assist member States in formulating, managing and evaluating ...", instead of "designing".

56. One representative observed that the first sentence of paragraph 10.3 was not necessarily true. Emphasis should be laid more on the rational utilization of manpower. Another problem not dealt with adequately in the paragraph should include the "brain drain", the causes of which

60. One representative stated that ECA should play a more active role on issues concerning refugees because of its role as a multidisciplinary regional organ and also because member States had considerable faith in the organization.

61. Concluding the discussions on these subprogrammes, a representative of the secretariat re-assured the representatives that the subprogrammes would be recast to incorporate the concerns of member states.

62. The Committee endorsed these subprogrammes subject to the discussion.

Subprogramme 14. Development information system in Africa

63. One representative observed that the presentation of the subprogramme gave the impression that the subprogramme was only just being established. There was need to refer to the activities already carried out in the previous medium-term plan period. He stated that the financial difficulties confronting member states should be among the problems to be addressed.

64. Another representative said that the activities described in paragrapn 127(f) should reflect the reality mentioned under paragraph 126 of the document. Emphasis should be put on the training of personnel and their rational utilization.

65. The Committee endorsed the subprogramme subject to these views.

Subprogramme 15. Environment in Africa

Subprogramme 18. Land mineral resources, non-living marine resources and legal aspects of marine affairs

Subprogramme 19. Water resources

Subprogramme 20. Energy and development in Africa

Subprogramm 23. Science and technology in Africa

66. These subprogrammes were reviewed together. Several representatives underlined the importance of the issues addressed in all the

subprogrammes. However, with regard to subprogramme 13 on the environment, it was pointed out that some major regionally agreed policy decisions had been taken in the recent past which were not adequately reflected in the subprogramme narrative. Mention was made in that connection to the memorandum of the Cairo meeting of the Conference of African Ministers of the Environment and the Kampala Programme of Action adopted by the Regional Conference on the Environment and Sustainable Development held in Kampala, Uganda in June 1989.

67. A number of representatives stressed the need for the Commission to pay particular attention during the plan period to the issues of toxic waste dumping. African countries had not yet acceded to the Basle convention on toxic waste mainly because they had not themselves harmonized their positions on toxic waste dumping. That was an area in which ECA, in collaboration with OAU, should assist African countries to formulate a common position on the issue of toxic waste. It was suggested that paragraph 131 of the document should be reviewed in that light.

68. Some representatives felt that the subprogramme should pay a much greater attention to environmental education particularly at the grassroot level. ECA, they believed, should devote more effort to the promotion of such education at all levels through especially the development of curricula for both primary and higher education as well as for mass education in rural areas. It was also suggested that in the proposed strategies, ECA should focus more on the alternative sources of building materials, energy and income.

69. It was suggested that paragraph 129(c) of the draft plan document should be redrafted to read "sustain environmental protection and conservation measures through polution control activities, particularly in respect of transboundary movement of hazardous wastes and potentially toxic materials".

70. One representative called for more strategies for combating natural calamities. The impact of existing industry on the environment was also believed to deserve more attention.

71. On subprogramme 10, land mineral resources, non-living marine resources and legal aspects of marine affairs, it was pointed out that the strategy should include measures to promote the local processing of mineral resources. One representative referred to paragraph 181 of the plan document where strategies relating to the mineral resources

development centres are treated and stressed that those centres should be provided with adequate resources. Another representative emphasized that the strategy in respect of sea-bed mining, needed to be more clearly spelled out particularly in relation to the Convention on the Law of the Sea.

72. With regard to the subprogramme on water resources, subprogramme 15, one representative pointed out the lack of regional arrangements for the development of river and lake basins as a basic problem to be addressed and called on the ECA to assist member States formulate appropriate policies for the development of such basins, particularly in the light of the recommendations of the Interregional Conference on River and Lake Basin held in November 1988. That, he said, should be a major objective of the subprogramme which should be stated in paragraph 185 of the document. He also proposed that the strategy outlined in paragraph 190 of the document should also include assistance by ECA to regional research centres such as the Centre for Hydrometeology in Kampala, Uganda. Another representative stressed that particular emphasis should be given to irrigation.

73. Some representatives underlined the close relationship between the environment and energy and stressed the crucial need for environmentally sound, cheaper alternative sources of energy.

74. A representative of the secretariat provided explanation on the issues raised and assured the representatives that their observations would be reflected in the redrafted version of the plan.

75. The Committee endorsed these subprogrammes subject to the views expressed.

Subprogramme 14: Human Settlements in Africa

Subprogramme 15: Industrial development in Africa

76. The two subprogrammes were reviewed together. Concerning human settlements in Africa, one representative observed that emphasis should be put both on shelter and employment activities. Human settlements should not be considered as homogenous. The problems to be addressed should acknowledge geographical and regional differences. The judicious use of

materials especially traditional building materials was also another problem to be addressed. The possibility of creating subregional research centres on human settlement should also be considered.

77. One representative referred to paragraph 138 of the document and proposed that the concept of design should be included. Another representative referring to paragraph 135 and 136 (d) of the document said that African economies were rural-based and it was the rural economy which contributed more to GDP. The question was therefore not only the integration of the rural sector but also that it should share the benefits of the national wealth. He pointed out, also, that paragraph 138 was a repetition of paragraph 137 of the same document. He proposed that the language of paragraph 140 needed to be toned down.

78. Another representative requested the secretariat to look in the possibility of sensitizing the population on their cultural reliefs which hindered progress in some parts of Africa.

79. With regard to subprogramme 15. Industry in Africa, one representative proposed that emphasis should be given to handicraft industries and the title of the subprogramme should be changed to Development of Industry and Handicraft in Africa.

80. Another representative stated that a new subprogramme dealing with small- and medium-scale industries should be introduced and stated that the development of small- and medium-scale industries should become a focal point in industrial policies of African countries.

81. Responding to the comments, a representative of the secretariat said that the proposals were noted and appropriate amendments would be reflected in the revised document. He agreed that the wealth of States derived mainly from the rural areas and that there was urgent need to reduce rural-urban imbalances. With regard paragraph 140 of the document, the idea was to show that there had been a rural exodus which caused a decline in productivity and hence a decline in food production. He informed the Committee that negotiations were under way with UNDP concerning a major regional project on building materials. He said that proposals for incorporating handicraft in the title of subprogramme 15 and the creation of a new subprogramme dealing with small and medium industry would be given due consideration. So would the idea of establishing subregional research centres on human settlements. He informed the meeting about the co-operation between ECA secretariat and India on small- and medium-scale industries.

82. The Committee endorsed these subprogrammes subject to the views expressed.

Subprogramme 16. Trade development and co-operation

Subprogramme 17. Monetary and financial policies and strategies

Subprogramme 25. Transnational corporations in Africa

83. Many representatives stressed the importance of trade development and co-operation and called for fundamental changes in production structures. Existing structures did not allow for the rapid expansion of trade between African countries since most countries produced the same commodities. Attention should be given to taste and preferences which were basic factors in the development of trade between developed countries. Accordingly, the harmonization of production among sub-regional economic groupings, as well as, the need for inter-subregional trade and the role of the informal sector were pointed out as issues that should feature prominently in the draft plan. One representative expressed the need for Africa to establish stock exchange markets for commodities.

84. It was proposed that paragraph 161 of the document should be rewritten to emphasize ECA's role as catalytic rather than the provision of intellectual leadership. Paragraph 163 of the document, was also to be revised because first there were real factors other than the lack of commitment which prevented the institutions from being fully operational and secondly, the paragraph presented an unnecessarily gloomy impression. It was also suggested that paragraph 164 of the document, should provide further clarification on the countries listed otherwise the reference to such countries should be removed altogether. Paragraph 171 (c) of the document should also include domestic savings and investment.

85. A representative of the secretariat noted the concerns of the Committee and explained that its comments would be taken into account in rewriting the draft plan. He referred in particular to the importance of taste and preference, but emphasized that those factors needed to be accompanied by product differentiation. The reference to a 'lack of commitment" in paragraph 163 of the document, was introduced to explain delays by member States in executing what had been agreed upon. He further informed the Committee of previous attempts to establish a Stock Exchange Market for commodities for the countries of Eastern and Southern Africa and the subsequent lack of interest on the part of those countries

to continue with the project. The issue of stock exchange markets for African commodities could nonetheless be re-introduced in the next Medium-term Plan.

86. The Committee endorsed those subprogrammes subject to the views expressed.

Subprogramme 21: Population in Africa

87. One representative underlined the importance of this subprogramme in the light of the adverse impact of rapid population growth rates on per capita incomes and standards of living. It was proposed that paragraph 207 item (g) of the document, should be revised to reflect the provision of assistance to institutions which were already in existence. Paragraph 208 should also be revised to emphasize the "shortage" rather than the "lack" of adequately trained personnel. Paragraph 210 of the document, should include infant mortality among the research studies to be prepared. And in paragraph 217, the word "aggressive" should be replaced by the word "intensive".

88. A representative of the Secretariat informed the Committee that the necessary corrections would be incorporated in the final draft and explained the underlying causes for the lack of adequate trained personnel. He expressed the secretariat's readiness to assist with the establishment and revitalization of national population commissions information systems.

89. The Committee endorsed the subprogramme subject to the views expressed during the discussion.

Subprogramme 22: Advancement of Women in Africa

90. Some representatives felt that the subprogramme narrative did not address the concrete operational realities relative to the advancement of women. For instance, the ways and means of attaining greater participation of women in decision-making which was mentioned as a problem to be addressed in paragraph 290 of the draft plan document were not properly articulated in the strategy. It was pointed out that, there was too much emphasis on the sensitization of women's concerns when what was needed was affirmative action. It was also stressed that a distinction should be made between urban and rural women and that appropriate strategies should be established for the two groups. A few

representative observed that in the description of the situation at the end of 1981, efforts made by governments should also be highlighted. One representative suggested that the reference to inadequate access to training, credit and technologies should be reviewed and reformulated to delete completely.

91. One representative proposed that a more appropriate title for the subprogramme would be "women in development". He, however, did not insist on the proposal when a representative of the secretariat explained that the title "advancement of women" was a wider concept which captured the objectives of the subprogramme better. The same representative of the secretariat explained that the subprogramme was indeed operational and that the activities to be carried out would be spelled out in the programme budget. He further explained that the secretariat recognized the different needs of urban and rural women. It nonetheless assured the representatives that the substance of the subprogramme narrative would be reviewed in the light of their observations.

92. The Committee endorsed the subprogramme subject to the views expressed during the discussion.

Subprogramme 26. [illegible]

93. One delegation called on ECA to improve the timeliness and accuracy of its data. Another stated that there appeared to be too much emphasis on environmental statistics in the proposed plan. A third called for greater co-ordination between ECA and OAU, particularly when the two organizations fielded questionnaires.

94. A representative of the secretariat explained that ECA depended on member States for its source of data. The timeliness and accuracy of the data therefore depended on the timeliness and accuracy with which such data was provided. Environmental statistics was an important new area in ECA's activities and as such needed to be emphasized, but that would not be at the expense of other statistical areas. He assured the Committee that co-ordination with OAU would be looked into to avoid duplication of efforts.

95. The Committee endorsed the subprogramme subject to the views expressed

Subprogramme 27. Transport in Africa

Subprogramme 28. Communications in Africa

Subprogramme 29. Tourism in Africa

96. The three subprogrammes were reviewed together. Several representatives stated that the subprogrammes were clearly formulated. One representative said that necessary resources should be allocated to the transport and communications subprogrammes as they were vital for the transformation of African economies. He proposed the following amendments. In paragraph 262 of the document, remove the reference to lack of integrated planning since difficulties encountered were also due to other factors such as financial difficulties, in paragraph 263, replace "have not been able" by "were not in a position", and in paragraph 291 reflect the actual problems encountered instead of simply indicating the inability or unwillingness of member States.

97. Several representatives stated that emphasis should be put on the difficulties encountered by member States during the implementation of institution building activities rather than the lack of policy or unwillingness on their part.

98. One representative suggested that paragraph 319(a) of the document should be extended to reflect the assistance of the secretariat to member States in the formulation of their projects and during negotiation with transnational corporations.

99. Responding to the comments, a representative of the secretariat said that the observations were well noted and that they would be reflected in the revised document. He acknowledged that member states encountered financial difficulties but felt that inspite of that, member states should make some effort to fulfill their commitments.

100. The Committee endorsed these subprogrammes subject to the views expressed.

Subprogramme 30: Management of technical co-operation activities

Subprogramme 31: Planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation

Subprogramme 32 Conference services

Subprogramme 33. Administrative and common services

101. The Committee felt that the objectives of subprogramme 30: Management of technical co-operation activities should be redrafted to take into account the changing international aid and technical assistance climate. The language and concepts used in the text were especially too nebulous and had no operational content. Emphasis should be put on the promotion of projects among African countries with a view to promoting self-reliance. In that connection, the secretariat should emphasize assistance to member States to expand their capabilities to negotiate technical assistance resources.

102. One representative wondered why no mention was made of internal auditing in the whole ECA programme. In response, a representative of the secretariat stated that internal auditing was undertaken by Headquarters. ECA did, however, have a strong internal control mechanism.

103. The Committee endorsed the subprogrammes subject to the views expressed during the discussion.

Subprogramme structure and the number of subprogrammes (agenda item 7(b))

104. In a brief introduction of this agenda item, a representative of the secretariat reminded the Committee of the overriding concern for a limited number of subprogrammes which at the same time reflected the main focus of the programme.

105. Several representatives were of the opinion that the number of subprogrammes, as presented, was ideal. The subprogrammes were formulated on the basis of the overall orientation of the programme and as such, adequately reflected the main concerns of African countries as they made efforts to move out of the prevailing economic and social crisis. The subprogrammes fully reflected the objectives of the Lagos Plan of Action. A reduction in their number would certainly obscure some of the issues.

106. Some representatives stated, however, that some room existed for the possible merger of a few related subprogrammes and the disaggregation of a few others in order to rationalize and focus the issues more. They made the following proposals.

(a) Merge subprogrammes 2. Agricultural development policy, planning and programming, with subprogramme 3: Development of sustainable agricultural systems into one subprogramme,

(b) Merge the social aspects of subprogramme 7. Socio-economic analysis, planning and projections; with subprogramme 11, to constitute a complete subprogramme on social development, or alternatively;

(c) Split subprogramme 7. Socio-economic analysis, planning and projections into two subprogrammes, namely, (i) Economic research and forecasting, and (ii) Social research and analysis,

(d) Merge subprogramme 14. Human settlements in Africa, subprogramme 20: Energy and development in Africa, together with 13: Environment in Africa under the title of Environment in Africa,

(e) Introduce a new subprogramme under industrial development in Africa to focus on medium- and small-scale industries,

(f) Merge subprogramme 32: Conference services and subprogramme 33. Administrative and conference services, into one subprogramme, with the title: Administrative and conference services,

(g) Merge subprogramme 6: water and living marine resources with subprogramme 19. water resources,

(h) Merge subprogramme 27. Transport in Africa, and subprogramme 28 Communications in Africa, into one subprogramme. Transport and communications in Africa.

107. The Deputy Executive Secretary drew the attention of the Committee to the fact that the number of subprogrammes had been reduced from about 29 substantive and support service subprogrammes in the 1984-1989 Medium-term Plan to 33 in the proposed plan.

108. The Ad Hoc Committee was of the view that the subprogramme structure could be retained as presented by the secretariat.

Designation of priorities among subprogrammes (agenda item 4 (c))

109. The Ad hoc Committee debated the issue of priority setting at length. It fully recognized that the United Nations was operating in a situation of severe resource constraints which made the ordering of priorities an imperative necessity. Africa was, however, a priority region of the United Nations and the urgency of its needs has been widely recognized by the international community as evidenced by the adoption by that community, of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (UN-PAAERD). The Ad hoc Committee was of the firm view that each and every subprogramme in the programme - Regional Co-operation for Development in Africa, was consistent with the priorities designated in UN-PAAERD. The Committee was, moreover, fully convinced that the full and complete implementation of the proposed programme would contribute substantially to the combined effort of the United Nations to address the critical situation in Africa. It was in that light that the Ad hoc Committee decided to urge the Secretary General to treat all the subprogrammes in the proposed programme as a priority for Africa and to allocate adequate resources to each of them for their effective implementation.

Adoption of the report and closure of the meeting (agenda item 5)

110. After making the necessary amendments on 13 October 1989, the Ad Hoc Committee adopted the present report together with the resolution on the Medium-term Plan 1992-1997.

111. The Chairman declared the meeting closed.